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PULPIT AND ROSTRUM.

Sermons, Orations, Popular Lectures, &c.

ANDREW J. GRAHAM AND CHARLES B. COLLAR, REPORTERS.

THE SABBATH

AND

ITS RELATIONS TO THE STATE:

BY THE

Hamilton
REV. ALEXANDER H. VINTON, D. D.

THE CONCLUDING DISCOURSE OF THE "SABBATH SERIES," DELIVERED IN ST. GEORGE'S
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No. 25.—THE WAR FOR THE UNION. An Address by WENDELL PHILLIPS, in December, 1861.

For Nos. 26 27 28 and 29 see last page of Cover.

Rev. Andrew S. Abbott
of Cambridge
March 1862

THE SABBATH,

AND ITS RELATIONS TO THE STATE.

*A Discourse by the Rev. A. H. Vinton, D.D., Rector of St. Mark's Church,
delivered Sunday evening, March 9, 1862, at St. George's Church, New York.*

[This is the concluding Discourse of a series of sermons recently delivered by the Rev. Drs. Rice, Hague, Ganse, Adams, Foster, and Vinton, under the auspices of the New York Sabbath Committee, and known as the "Sabbath Series." It was addressed to one of the largest and most substantial religious audiences ever assembled—the church, which is one of the most commodious in America, being filled to its utmost capacity. The entire series will soon be given to the public in a permanent form, and we are indebted for the privilege of this advance publication to the courtesy of the Committee's efficient Secretary.]

"If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words; then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will exalt thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."—*Isaiah* lviii. 13, 14.

It sometimes happens in our dealings with nature, or art, or institutions, that some emergency obliges us to go back to the beginning to explore the roots, readjust the foundations, and rescue and restore first principles.

So it has happened in reference to the Christian Sabbath.

Adopted by this nation with the common law of England, with which the Sabbath was inwrought, warp and

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1862, June 4.
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of Cambridge.
(Class of 1826)

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Alexander Hamilton

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So it has happened in reference to the Christian Sabbath.

Adopted by this nation with the common law of England, with which the Sabbath was inwrought, warp and

woof; recognized again and again by our legislation throughout the land as peculiar and sacred time; a day shut out from the range of secular business, a non-legal day; cherished, too, by the people as the mother of many rich and rare social blessings, the Sabbath has at length begun in some quarters to suffer a perversion which, by changing holyday privileges into holiday amusements, and construing the exemption from legal obligations as a freedom from legal restraints, has amounted to desecration. Then, as a natural consequence, the whole theory of the Sabbath has been contested.

Its authority, its perpetuity, its sacredness, and its design have been contradicted by argument, as they had already been resisted by practice.

Hence the origin of this series of sermons, as well as of other means to vindicate and set on their true position the claims of the Sabbath in its various uses to man.

In lending such help as I may to this endeavor, my special theme is the Sabbath in its relations to the State, with the consideration of some of its safeguards.

Our text brings very distinctly to view the civil advantages of a right observance of the Sabbath.

"If thou call the Sabbath the holy of the Lord, honorable, and shalt honor Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words, I will exalt thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

Here we have a religious act followed by national and civil benefits. They are linked together as cause and effect, at least so far as the Jewish nation was concerned. It was, indeed, an abiding characteristic of that Divine

polity under which the descendants of Abraham were bred, that religious obedience began temporal blessings. And since the principles of the Divine government are unchangeable, and since the Sabbath is as much ours as theirs, why should not the same links of connection remain unbroken?

The origin of the Sabbath back in the creative epoch, when God rested from his works, and when there was only one human family on the earth, proves that the Sabbath was meant to be, not Jewish, but Adamic. Moreover, the Saviour's declaration, "the Sabbath was made for man," although spoken for another and a specific purpose, seems to carry with it the idea of universality. If the Sabbath was made for man, why not for all men—for the whole race? And thus again the Sabbath is not national and local, but generic and general. So that in either of the fixed relations of human life, the Sabbath is capable of being a boon and a blessing to man. Among those fixed relations stands the national life of man. His social nature works out spontaneously into this form as one of its necessary and vital developments. While the domestic relation into which every man is born creates the sphere of those familiar affections, which we call home feelings, makes home the dearest word in human speech, makes the family circle the very realm of the heart's regency, and makes the family institution a perpetual necessity of human nature; and while, again, the religious instinct of man embodies and represents itself in that standing organization which we call the visible church, so likewise does the same law of social necessity urge and drive out his nature into that other form of development which groups the whole race into nations and states.

The world has never been without the several forms of national life, as a part of the fixed constitution of human society; and whatever, therefore, can do good or harm to man's essential nature, whatever was meant for the generic man, must take in his national as much as his domestic or ecclesiastical connection.

The Sabbath was designed, no doubt, as the type of a public religious life, and it presupposes, therefore, the importance of religion to every community for whom the Sabbath was appointed. How important, then, is religion to the life of the State, becomes in this connection an interesting preliminary question. And this question will be found to be answered only in one way, whether we consult philosophy or fact—the nature of things, or plain human history. The nature of things teaches us that no civil government can subsist long and effectually that does not invoke support from the powers of another world. Its oaths and affirmations must reach out into eternity. Its sovereignty must represent in the nation the dominion of God in the world.

The throne must be higher than the earth that men tread upon. The magistracy must be girded with a power that was not born of a creature. Its King must be hedged with divinity. And loyalty, submission, and obedience must have an object higher than the common human pre-eminence of luck, or strength, or blood. The sentiment of reverence, which is the prime element of all religion, is the mother of civil order and the grand conservator of law. It nurses the common conscience, and holds the people by the bonds of a filial allegiance. No matter what the form of the government, all civil authority must gather to itself somewhat of a religious sanction,

to be cordially and truly obeyed. And history bears out this antecedent evidence of reason. For where was there ever a nation worthy to be called historical, one which had ever emerged from mere animal barbarism, with whom religion was not a prime power and chief care?

However false the religious system, however absurd its doctrines or superstitious its rites, they one and all appealed to that universal instinct which distinguishes man from the brutes, and suggests the powerful motives that belong to eternity; hopes and fears which, though often erroneous or extreme, betoken the superiority of his nature, and by their very existence prove him to be a subject of the highest moral government.

In Egypt, and among the Orientals, religion was the chief object of the State. This was the only tie that held the Grecian tribes together as a commonwealth. The Amphyctionic Council, the great reserved fountain of authority to the Greek States, was instituted for no other purpose than the regulation of religion. The ancient Roman constitution was characterized by the same feature, to which their great statesman and orator attributes all their national pre-eminence; for says Cicero, "Though we have been surpassed in population by the Spaniards, in physical force by the Gauls, in shrewdness and cunning by Carthage, in the fine arts by Greece, and in mere native talent by some of our Italian fellow-countrymen, yet, in the single point of attention to religion, we have excelled all other nations; and it is to the favorable influence of this fact upon the character of the people that I ascribe our success in acquiring the political and military ascendancy that we enjoy throughout the world."

If we follow down the times, we find the religious fea-

ture prominent, if not predominant, in the various forms of civil society, and through the progressive phases of national life; and so nearly universal, that when we meet the one solitary exception, now become proverbial, in which a nation deliberately rejected all religious faith, and strangled on system the religious instinct of human nature, we halt to mark the issue of such a monstrous experiment with man's moral vitality; and as we see it culminating in the reign of terror, wrenching asunder the limbs and ligaments of the body politic, and blotting one whole generation-page of history with human blood, we turn away with the shuddering conviction, that he who denies religion to the nation is guilty of a cruel falsehood, against which nature protests, and which time will refute in a nation's wailing and tears.

If thus much may be claimed in general for the value of religion to the well-being of the state, let us see how much more forcible these considerations become when applied to our national life and our peculiar institutions. For we have inaugurated a system of government which has no strict precedent or parallel in history. It has difficulties all its own, overbalanced, however, by capabilities which render it potentially the highest style of civil society.

Its difficulties are compressed and denoted by its very title—a free government. The seeming contradiction of these words is only an exponent of the antagonisms which must be practically harmonized to bring the government into working order and insure its success. "To make a government," says Mr. Burke, "is one of the easiest things. It is only for one to command and for the others to obey. To give freedom is likewise easy. It is only to

relax all control, and let men do as they will. But to make a free government is the most difficult achievement of man's reason."

The ground of the remark is obvious enough; for government, of whatever sort, implies control of some sort, and a free government is essentially a self-government.

The plain peculiarity of such a government is that the authority springs up from within itself.

Other governments are imposed upon the people—this grows up among the people. In other governments the people are compacted and hooped around by pressure. In a free government they are fused and mingled by an internal process into a solid mass.

The one is a diluvium, and the other a conglomerate.

The phrase self-government implies a duality of nature with oneself to govern and another self to be governed. Every human personality is a twofold self; the one comprising man's appetites, his passions, his will—in a word, his selfishness; and the other comprehending his reason, his conscience, and whatever gives human nature its true and immortal dignity.

This is the higher and the true self of man, to which the attribute of sovereignty belongs.

He is not truly self-governed who surrenders himself to the dominion of his propensities, and lets the nobler self be conquered and ruled by the less noble. He is the victim rather of bondage so base that none can be more debasing. And this, which is true of the individual man, is equally true when you multiply the individual into a community, and enlarge the phase of character into a grand corporate national man.

The nation being but the aggregate of individuals, the

national life and character is the grand resultant product of the affinities, combinations, actions, and counter-actions which are constantly at work among the people themselves.

A nation given up to the dominion of selfishness and passion would soon cease to be a nation, because it is the property of selfishness to separate men and individualize them. In the heat of personal passion the cement of society is dissolved and leaks out—the community is disintegrated, the corporate nation loses its organic life and becomes resolved into the ashes to ashes and dust to dust of political chaos, which is anarchy.

A popular government needs, then, above all others, the controlling power of reason and conscience—the first to point out the right ends and means of government, and the other to determine the right motives; a power to enable the nation to stand sentinel over itself, not only to defend its rights against an invader, but to hold its own members in check; not only to fire upon a foe, but to point the bayonet at the breast of every truant or insurgent who would break the bounds of discipline and trouble the peace of its own camp. Now, when we speak of reason and conscience, we employ only another name for an enlightened religious sense. The nation, therefore, must be religious, and as the national life is but the aggregate of individual lives, every citizen must furnish his quota of the aggregate religion of the nation. Nay, every citizen must be as scrupulously conscientious as if he bore the whole responsibility of the national character, must be inspired by the worthiest motives to elect the worthiest means, to secure the worthiest aims; or in other words, to carry out the great rule of social peace and prosperity

which is expressed in the second table of God's great law, to "love our neighbors as ourselves." And since the law of God is essentially a unit and an integer, and can not be split into fragments to be used in part, and in part rejected; since there is no true morality which is not based on conscience; and since conscience has its life breathed into it only by piety, it follows that this national religion must take in the first and great commandment of the moral code, and hold itself as profoundly reverent toward the claims of God, as it is affectionately considerate of the mutual rights and interests of the people. This is the religion necessary to a popular government, not only in its true theory, but in its practical success likewise. For we can easily see that wherever there is freedom, the chiefest danger of the Republic springs from within rather than presses from abroad; comes from corruption more than from invasion; and for a like reason the strength and glory of a free government are only the blossoms of its own virtues begotten of itself, and nourished by its own sap and power of right life. We can see, therefore, how the Divine promise to a religious nation is illustrated by the law of cause and effect, and most eminently in a popular government such as ours. Both the promise and the law warrant the conclusion, that the national virtue is the guarantee of national prosperity. But this conclusion starts a fresh inquiry, Why is the Divine promise attached to a particular form of religious expression, a mere ritual service? Is the observance of the Sabbath, as an outward institute, so necessary a proof of the people's religion, that its non-observance will entail the forfeiture of the Divine favor and the failure of the nation? If it can be shown that the Sabbath is a condition without which re-

ligion can not thrive, then it becomes at once invested with all the solemnity of importance which belongs to religion itself. As an assigned and natural expression of the public religion, it may be regarded as inseparable from the existence of religion. The necessity of some such expression grows out of a certain principle that lies back in the nature of things, which may be explained thus: The world is only a compound of two simple elements, force and form, of which each is the complement of the other. Take either away, and there is no world. Take away force, and the form is a dead organism. Take away form, and force is such a tricky and intangible thing, with no outline or complexion, that we have no language to describe it. Thought itself can not arrest it. Its name is only like the X in Algebra, an unknown quantity. Out of this necessary constitution of force and form springs the great law of expression, which pervades and penetrates the world. It begins with the widest generality, and ends in the minutest particularity. The abstract must have a concrete, the conception must body itself forth in a phenomenon; the spiritual must mate itself with the material; soul with sense, and Deity with incarnation. Truth must create a book; mind must have a brain to think with; affection a heart to love with, and a tongue to tell its love, or at least a grave-stone. Take away from any of these vital forces their appropriate forms and expressions, and you reduce the forces themselves to such a shrunk and shriveled condition, that you can have no proof of their existence. Their life has fallen into a catalepsy. Now we are not to suppose that the great vital force of man's moral being, his religion, is exempt from this law of expression. Faith, too, must have its confession. While

with the heart man believeth unto justification, with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. And when you extend that faith, so that it becomes the faith of a community, then the confession must take a definite and fixed form. It must become an institute, palpable, plain, and public. Hence the system of Christian faith takes of a necessity a corporate form. Hence the necessity of a visible church, and hence, too, the host of God's elect are made a "sacramental host." Not that a private person can not have a religious heart without the tangible sacraments, or that he can not pray but in the worship of the visible church. Not that he may not express his religion, faith, and love in other ways, but that he may and must express them thus: That since his faith is a common faith, its expression shall be common, and therefore its form must, in the nature of things, be determined and fixed.

Under the same category as the visible church and its sacramental and public ordinances, we may place the Sabbath as one of those definite institutes which express in the most emphatic form the religion of the community, and which as a form of expression becomes indispensable to the conservation of the power, if not of the very life itself, of religion. Abolish the Sabbath as the time for fixed and periodic religious service—leave it to the arbitrary choice of individuals to determine their own times of special worship and religious duties, and you expose the religion of the people to a fearful trial. You leave each man to his unassisted piety—you trust his personal courage and conscience to tear him loose from the clinging cares and associations of the world to break through the forces that press around to hold him where he is; companions, businesses, hospitalities, recreations; and, with a

heroism most rare, to refuse every temptation, and to go away by himself and spend his own self-chosen Sabbath in lonely worship of prayer and thanks. And he must endure this small martyrdom with every return of his holy day. Is any ordinary piety of a fiber strong enough to stand this tug and strain, week by week? Would it not succumb at last, weary and worn out with the long struggle against its circumstances until the religion of individuals, one by one, having given way, the religion of the community would die out? Or if, after all, conscience should be too strong for this, would not this striving and tempted man, who would keep his holiness alive, seek sympathy from others laboring and worried like himself? Would they not band themselves into a fellowship in imitation of the visible church, and spread their common rites and ordinances throughout the land, and invent a Sabbath as a day of periodical religion—a monument and memorial of the faith to keep it perpetual and make it universal? They would be driven to it by the necessities of piety to save their religion from being exhausted by too much conflict and too little support. Just as our fasts and thanksgivings are more solemn and edifying because they are public or national; just as our individual patriotism derives a fresh glow and new stir from the fourth of July or the birthday of Washington, when the nation's heart beats aloud with the same pulse as ours; so do the convictions, purposes, beliefs, hopes, and impulses of our personal religious life get periodical force and vigor from the sanctions, sympathies, supports, and stimulants of a Sabbath sacredly and universally kept, re-attesting to men's eyes and ears what their hearts had already accepted, yet tremulously held, the momentous worth and grandeur to

each soul of that religion which was thus grandly and publicly symbolized. Some sacred day, to be constantly distinguished from week-day and working-day, is therefore a constant necessity of the religious life of any community of men.

How much greater its worth and power, then, when the day is not invented, but assigned and sanctioned from Heaven, bearing on its front not only the stamp of human expediency, but the august signature of the Father of our lives.

But in order to illustrate the influences of the Sabbath well kept, upon the character of a people, let us dwell upon those influences severally. Consider, then, the educational power of the Sabbath; and, first, its power of educating the mind. Since we have adopted it as an axiom in our politics, that the prosperity of a free people depends upon their intelligence as well as their virtue, the question is invested with first-rate importance, how far the Sabbath is an educator of the intellect. I think the question may be answered by challenging the competition of any and every other sort of instruction. If we except some particular departments of learning, such as the exact and the progressive sciences, the sources of mental culture belonging to the Sabbath are rich and rare beyond parallel.

Take, for example, that part of education which consists in supplying the mind with the facts and suggestions which may be called the mind's furniture, the material of thought, such as comes from reading, and makes what Sir Francis Bacon calls "a full man." The Sabbath supplies this to the mind, because it is all found in the Bible, and the Sabbath is the Bible's peculiar day. Its readings

and preachings are derived from that book of books, and so identified are they in purpose and in practice, that we never conceive of a religious Sabbath but as the background of a picture on which the high lights and the richest tints are formed of the instructions, suggestions, and promises of the Word of God. Whatever of instruction, therefore, the Bible can furnish to the intellect of man, is part and parcel of the worth of the Sabbath. How various that instruction is! There is history which, so far as it goes, is more authentic than any other ancient records of the race. There are facts and phenomena of nature which are just as truly matters for scientific inquiry as any more recent. There is poetry, descriptive, suggestive, and lyrical, grander than Homer, more spiritual than Wordsworth, more tenderly touching than Tennyson; eloquence of every sort, from the grandly vehement to the meltingly pathetic; rhetoric that presents the most apt and striking combinations of human language, and in every form of composition, narrative, didactic, and dramatic. There are maxims of life and manners, pithy and sententious, that cling like burs to the memory, and are full of "the seeds of things;" prudential rules of a wise life, furnishing every man with a truth just suited to every chance-need of his business or behavior. Such is this many-sided book as a mere vehicle for instruction to the mind. No man can study its language fresh from the wells of English undefiled, without finding his faculties stirred and refreshed, his understanding informed, his taste refined, his judgment improved, and his whole mental stature grown taller and fuller. Besides this education which furnishes the mind, there is a still better sort which disciplines and strengthens it; and this, too,

comes from the same source, the Sabbath and its Bible. This special benefit to the intellect proceeds from the character of the themes presented by the Sabbath and the Bible—the grandest and profoundest that can be proposed to an intelligent being. They are God, his being, his attributes, his law, his providence, his counsels of judgment and of grace, the wonderful plan of redemption, involving the humiliation, the mediation, and the royal triumph of the Redeemer; Eternity with its deep, abysmal truths, involving the destinies of all immortal creatures; and Man, his nature and character; man spiritual and sensual too; his weakness, and his capacity for great strength; his sin, and his potential holiness; his danger, and his hopes; his guilt, and its cleansing; his soul-sickness, and its divine cure; his death, and his resurrection of immortality, all crowned by the sublime inquest of a universal judgment. Here are themes which never could occur spontaneously to the minds of ordinary men; and if to extraordinary men, they could come only as dreams or snatches of thought; self speculations and gymnastics of the mind, with no solemn sanction, no reality, and so no profit. But the Sabbath forces them forward as great live truths upon the thoughts of men. They must face them, grasp them, and grapple with them seriously. And this puts the mind to its stoutest mettle. It has to stretch itself to the grandest issues of thought; has to go down into the depths and up to the heights of contemplation; down into the principles of things, and up to their consummation; to contemplate God, and to anatomize itself; to survey the outside universe, and to explore the microcosm of man's inner nature; to become familiar with the great principles of law; to trace the

harmony of Providence as it is explained by faith, and to thread the labyrinths of human history by the clew of Christ's mediatorial reign. I do not say that any of these huge themes, jutting out from the dark infinitude, can be thoroughly explored and comprehended by the best intellect of man. But no intellect can come in front of them without a strange consciousness of development. The very contact of the mind with thoughts and themes like these energizes it, puts life into it. And when these themes are pronounced as revelations, as facts and realities made known to man by God himself; the mind, pressed from within by the strongest incentive it is capable of, endeavors to hold and master them and make them a part of itself. The very effort inspires strength, makes the mind stalwart and robust, and secures the best result of the highest disciplinary education. Suppose a man, who is destitute of the ordinary facilities of education, to devote the fifty-two Sabbaths of the year to the studious contemplation of these Sabbath themes, and so for twenty years. Does any one doubt that the education of these more than thousand days, almost as much as the four years of a collegiate life, would find him far in advance of his associates in all the proofs and fruits of mental culture? Would he not be a first-rate subject of a free government, with a riper intelligence than most men, fitter than most men to cast a ballot, if he were not indeed fit to govern a commonwealth? A great advantage of this education of the Sabbath is, that it is periodical; not so frequent as to make it a drudgery, and not so rare as to endanger the permanence of its impression. It is to every class of men, specially and peculiarly, a rest and refreshing. To the industrial classes, whose vocations lie among solid and

material things, and to the commercial class, whose life is the arithmetic of earthly values and products, the Sabbath gives opportunity and incitement to a fresh set of faculties, and opens the windows of the mind to let in the fresh air of thoughts from God and a better life. And even to the classes whose business is thought, the Sabbath is still a rest, while it is still an education. The lawyer escapes from the perplexities of conflicting precedents, contradictory judgments, and equivocal proprieties into the pure light of truth and the glorious certainties of righteousness. And the physician can separate himself awhile from the painful study of second causes to familiarize his mind with the workings of the first cause. And the men of science and philosophy would lose nothing, but gain much, by taking God's existence as a stand-point of thought for awhile; and God's government and providence as a controlling fact in nature, and the foundation of a system of final causes. Such Sabbath thoughts would be no less a rest to them than to the laborious classes. For to those whose habit of life is thinking, the maxim of Sir William Jones is always true, that "the change of study is recreation enough." Such a mental education is peculiarly adapted to form the citizenship of a free government. For it begets that peculiar mental characteristic which we call intelligence; that is, not a mere technical skill in certain branches of learning which sharpen the mind but do not broaden it—which make the mind expert without making it wise; a sort of Austrian education, fitting a man to be a clever subject of a despotism, but not a free citizen of a popular government—not that—but, instead of that, an education which makes the whole mind of larger growth; broader, deeper, and solider at the same time, with more

of muscle of manhood, of general effectiveness and power of thinking. This is plainly the education we need. Can there be a doubt whether this is the very education conferred by the Sabbath, and not reached—not even imitated in any other school?

The other indispensable qualification for the citizen of a Republic, besides intelligence, is what is called *virtue*—a cultivated moral sense, an enlightened conscience. This and the due culture of the intellect are the Jachin and Boaz of that grand political structure which we hold almost as sacred as a temple—a free Republic. Consider, then, the Sabbath as an educator of the conscience. It is too late in the world's history to vindicate the claims of the Bible in this respect. The acknowledgment has long ago been extracted or extorted from all sorts of men, that its code of morals is not only matchless, but amazing. And every week this body of moral precept and principle is presented and pressed home upon a Sabbath-keeping community. The grand peculiarity of this morality is, that it recognizes the word *ought* as an imperative word in every question of ethical conduct. It roots and grounds itself on the conscience. It does not palter with great principles, like Paley, and give up man's noble moral sense to be hoodwinked, and led hither and yon by a dwarfed, limping, near-sighted expediency. It does not, like Jeremy Bentham, propose the greatest happiness of the greatest number, as the rule of conduct, requiring omniscience to determine the smallest proprieties of life, and leaving the conscience more dismally befogged than nature made it. So singular, in fact, is the Bible on its recognition of right and wrong, as absolute facts or principles, that in all the progress of the ages no system of ethics was ever enun-

ciated which was based on this distinction alone until the Christian, Butler, rescued this divine principle from the mob of human speculations, where it was in danger of being strangled or torn to pieces, and clothed it afresh in the graceful robe of a Christian philosophy. But it was always in the Bible, whole, simple, and grand; the principle that men must do right, because they ought; the fact that they have a conscience to enforce that ought; that conscience is an imperial faculty transferred from Heaven, armed with Divine prerogatives to approve with sweet peace when man obeyed God, and to punish with stings of scorpions when he refused and rebelled. And it is in the Bible still—this standard of moral conduct—in all its simplicity, integrity, and grandeur. It is the moral teaching of the Sabbath. It is pronounced to the ears of every keeper of the Sabbath. And not to his ear only, but to his soul. For it is God's voice that speaks, and speaks with the authority of a creator and the tenderness of a father—speaks alike from Sinai and from Calvary—speaks with the sanctions of eternity and the persuasions of love; and while it rouses the conscience to the ennobling sense of duty, changes the old heart to a new, and inspires it with such love for the right, that the law of God may be said to be written within it. This is the finished product of moral character, begotten legitimately of the Sabbath. It is, indeed, a converted and Christian character. But even where it fails of this completeness of result, it is still the most perfect plan of moral instruction and training. No person can come into habitual contact and contemplation of such instruction without deriving a certain clearness and strength to his moral convictions which will elevate his whole manhood. Taught of God, he will be both in-

dependent of men and reverent to authority. But his independence, being conscientious, will be without arrogance, and his reverence, being inspired, will be without servility. Is not this the beau-ideal of moral manhood, animated and actuated with the conscious dignity of duty? Out of this grow loyalty, patriotism, the love of order, and of law; and, indeed, every civic virtue. And when diffused abroad, out of it comes a controlling, national conscience which unites the whole people in the repressing of public wrong, and the maintenance and defense of universal right.

Is not the moral demand of the Republic met, then? Is not such morality a fit qualification for its citizenship? Is such morality taught and enforced in any other school, as it is by the schooling of the Sabbath?

We may rest here from the discussion of the direct influence of the Sabbath as an educational power. But we can hardly help remembering another sort of influence which, though indirect, is still powerful and very wholesome. It arises out of the very subsistence of the Sabbath as a sacred and public day, with all its associations and incidents. The very pausing from work, the release from the heat, the hurry, the noise, the dust of the week-day, to the cleanliness, the order, and sobriety of a holy day, is of itself a social influence that is very salutary. The mingling of all classes upon the one platform of the church on terms that presuppose the equality of all, praying the same prayers, listening to the same divine truths that were meant for all alike—all stirred alike by the same power or pathos of its appeals and persuasions, the felt force of that sympathy which makes the whole world kin, combining the self-respect of the individual manhood with the gentle

feelings of a common brotherhood ; here is the much needed antidote to that envy of rivalry which is the peculiar danger of a popular community, where the separation of classes is not determined by law or caste, and where all are competitors for equal honors or success. These, and like these, are the indirect influences of the Sabbath, surrounding the character and pressing like the atmosphere upon every inch of it. It throws over the robust form of the political character the grace of a social charm, and smooths the ruggedness of personal independence with that best of good breeding, viz., the inbred kindness of brotherhood and charity. Of all these benefits, then, the mental, the moral, and the social, may not the Christian Sabbath claim the maternity? I do not disparage other supposable means and agencies for effecting these results, nor do I draw any comparison of advantage with them. It is enough to know that the positive, if not the singular power, of the Sabbath has been fairly stated. If so, it is but an equivalent statement to say, that to the purity and stability of a popular government the Sabbath is absolutely indispensable. And from this statement there is but a single step to the practical conclusion, that among us the Sabbath ought to be maintained as a national institute, a power of the state expressing the civic form of religion; the fixed confession of the nation's allegiance to Him who is King of other kings, and Lord of all other lords.

Pardon me, then, for a few remaining words touching the methods for its maintenance. The first and most obvious of these is the requisition to be made by the public upon the public, that the Sabbath, when kept, shall be kept holy. It were a fallacy in logic, and a perversion in

morals, to claim that the Sabbath shall be a festival, and not a sacred festival. The same authority that prescribes the appointment, covers likewise its conditions. Nay, the very pith and emphasis of the appointment is concentrated in the one word "holy." If man were only an animal, with no moral activities and capacities for evil, it might be enough to prescribe a stated rest of one day in seven, as a mere sanatory provision for the recruiting of his physical powers; and the result, as shown by experience, would be a large economy of life and of labor. But when with all his susceptibilities, mental, moral, and social, you turn him loose from labor at stated intervals upon a world of unregulated excitements, with no object suited to the day but the negative one of doing no work, then you turn the day of grace and moral health into a season of temptation. You throw down the moral barriers with which even the work of the week-day screens his nature against wickedness, and you make him accessible at every point of his character to all the surrounding influences of evil. The inevitable result will be, that all the moral power of the Sabbath will be transmuted to evil, on the principle that whatever is most effective for good becomes by perversion proportionately bad; on the principle that an archangel ruined becomes the chief of the fiends. The Sabbath thus becomes a Saturnalia; the day of rest, a day of idleness; the Devil's holiday with the idle man for his playfellow.

The Sabbath, therefore, must be maintained as a public institute in the integrity of its sacredness, and its first safeguard is the protection of the laws. Although the constitutionality of the Sabbath is no longer an open question, yet the extent to which fresh legislation may be carried is, and has been, a matter of contest. No doubt the

genius of our system would dictate extreme caution in the way of the positive enforcement of Sabbath duties. Yet, since the whole presumption of law and precedent is in favor of the Sabbath as an existing religious institute, there would seem to be no reason why a negative and defensive legislation may not be most stringent and peremptory, saving the liberty of the individual conscience by not exacting a personal worship; but saving, too, the purity of the public conscience by forbidding the open desecration of the public worshipping day. There may be at least a legislative prohibition of such amusements and revelries as amount to a moral nuisance. There may be at least a bar placed upon that moral dishonesty which robs God of the seventh, when he has already given us the six days of life. The community owes to itself, as an act of self-preservation, such conservative legislation as this. The people owe it to their fathers, in maintaining their legacy of a free government, to cling likewise to those vital conditions of the bequest, which were the first cost of the possession, and are now its main security.

If opposition should arise from a part of the population born and bred under another political sky, who would plant in our soil their exotic ideas of national morality and popular rights, let our legislation be as an appeal to their modesty to enjoy our privileges without invading our proprieties. Let them not wrong the warm-hearted welcome to our political household, by disturbing the order and peace of the family.

Another safeguard of the Sabbath may be found in the diligent use of the system of Sunday Schools. Let the children of recusant foreigners be gathered from all quarters to be taught and trained for a Christian life, and with

the next generation the anti-Sabbath virus will be purged from the body politic, and we shall all be religiously as well as nationally American.

And not to multiply expedients, let all those who cherish the Sabbath as a national institute to be kept holy to the Lord, extend their personal influence, negative and positive, to its thorough and due observance. Remember the holiness of its afternoon as well as of its morning. Do not attempt, by the worship of the church, to buy an indulgence for the revelries of the dining-room. Do not select God's festival time for man's feasting time. Do not make the social duty of hospitality override the divine duty of communion with God. Let every family that believes in the Sabbath live as becomes their faith.

Let the domestic Sabbath be kept, and the national Sabbath will not be destroyed. Holy homes will make a holy nation, chosen of the Lord, and honorable. In virtue of that fixed law of the universe by which the meek inherit the earth; the law which draws temporal blessings in the train of moral well-doing as the waters close in and follow the wake of the ship—by that law, guaranteed by God's promise, it will happen that the nation "will be exalted to ride upon the high places of the earth," receiving the tribute of acknowledgment from all the earth, that a free government is the crown and perfection of man's civil existence. And it shall "be fed with the heritage of Jacob;" an influence and power of blessing whose dominion shall be universal, "from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth," and lasting as the covenant of God. "For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

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